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Advergames
are shaking the
marketing industry

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The Power of Advergames

Do you ever worry that you're annoying your consumers? If you're using digital ads for your marketing, you have reason to be worried. Adblocker Plus has over 300 million users and over 64% of them use it because they find ads to be annoying or intrusive.

And digital ads don't even engage consumers long enough to make the risk of annoying them worth it. The average viewer spends less than one second looking at a digital ad.

But the challenges surrounding digital ads are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to reaching consumers in today's world. Consumers are more demanding with brands today than they've ever been; they want to know a brand's personality, mission, and values. Similarly, brands are more proactive with consumer outreach and connection now than in the past, nearly 80% of marketers use a social media channel to promote their brand.

Consumers are being flooded with different brands fighting to gain their attention and loyalty. The result is an ultra-competitive digital marketing space with continuously decreasing ROI.

To avoid falling into this decreasing ROI trap, break away from the marketing practices all other brands are using.

Turn your brand into a game to engage consumers, increase brand awareness, promote your products and services, and increase sales.



1. The evolution of advergames

Before we get into all the ways games level up your marketing efforts, we'll first give an overview of what an advergame is.

An advergame is any downloadable or Internet-based game that advertises a brand-name product by featuring it as part of the game. Advergaming has been used as a marketing tool for quite some time now, here's a picture of Kool-Aid Man, which was released on Atari and Intellivision in 1983.

Branded games aren't a new concept, but there have been some seismic changes in the recent past that have evolved them. **These changes have helped advergaming become a powerful marketing tool.**



The dominance of digital marketing

Marketing is a continually evolving field because consumers are always changing. You've realized that over 250 million people in the U.S. own a smartphone and that consumers' engagement is highly dependent on technology, so you've adjusted your marketing strategies to fit consumers' preferences.

The main problem with that is, all other marketers have taken note as well. The odds are you're one of the contributors of the \$16.6 billion in ads revenue Facebook reported in the final quarter of 2018. The ROI of using Facebook and other digital platforms has drastically gone down because they're being flooded with different brands.



We still think digital is a powerful way to reach consumers, but another medium of communication is needed as the others have reached their respective peaks.

The rise of mobile gaming

Another enormous change in the last few years is the impressive rise of mobile gaming. More and more people in the U.S. and around the world are indulging in the magical world of mobile games because they're easily accessible and extremely entertaining.

The quality of advergames

Advergames have come a long way since games like Kool-Aid Man. Instead of requiring a console like an Xbox or an Atari, a player can access advergames today through their smartphone. This means consumers can engage with brands anytime, anywhere.

Whereas old advergames used to rely on likability and positive association driving sales, branded games use likability, in-store and in-game rewards to funnel players into stores.

The games now can go right into your brand's loyalty app to create a streamlined process from initial interaction to purchase.

We further go into this in the sales section, but basically, putting a game in your loyalty app further incentivizes customers to visit your stores, engage with and promote your brand.

There are 3 different kinds of advergimes, each level possessing increased effectiveness:



1. Product placement:

Product placement is when a brand pays a game company to feature the brand's products in one of their games.

2. Playable ads:

A playable ad is a digital advertisement that often comes in the form of a banner ad on a digital device, but can also be a downloadable game, or a game inside an application or web site. The ad offers the consumer a free or discounted product if the consumer plays the branded game.

3. Building a game world around a brand:

The game has unique music, colors, and game features to represent the brand's personality and mission.

Each increasing level of advergime possesses the qualities of the one before it. Building a game world around your brand means **you also have the features of product placement and playable ads, and more.** In the rest of this literature, we'll be focusing on advergimes that build a game world around a brand.

2. Advergames hook consumers

The first goal in marketing is getting the consumer's attention. If you don't capture their attention, you don't have an opportunity to educate or entertain them. Meanwhile, the task is becoming increasingly harder as the average consumer now has an attention span of just 8 seconds.

Advergames are visually appealing

Visual images were ranked as the most important form of content by marketers in a HubSpot survey. Visual images are powerful because they can grab a consumer's attention much more effectively than written content.



Images and videos from your branded game would make for excellent visual images. You can use these aesthetically pleasing images on all kinds of marketing platforms to captivate consumers and get them focused on your brand.

Downloading an advergaming is an enticing CTA

Visual images are almost always a means to an end. Great visual images aren't just pretty pictures; they educate and act as a call-to-action, to get consumers to continue to indulge in your brand's content.

“Download our free game” is a more enticing CTA than consumers are used to. It's more likely to inspire them to take action. Mobile games are a valuable source of entertainment; that's why the average player plays for 23 minutes per day. People don't need a lot of convincing to escape to the magical world of mobile games.

You don't have to pull your hair out anymore trying to figure out how to get customers to download your loyalty app or consume your content.



Games lock players in on your brand

People love games and play them frequently because they give players value.

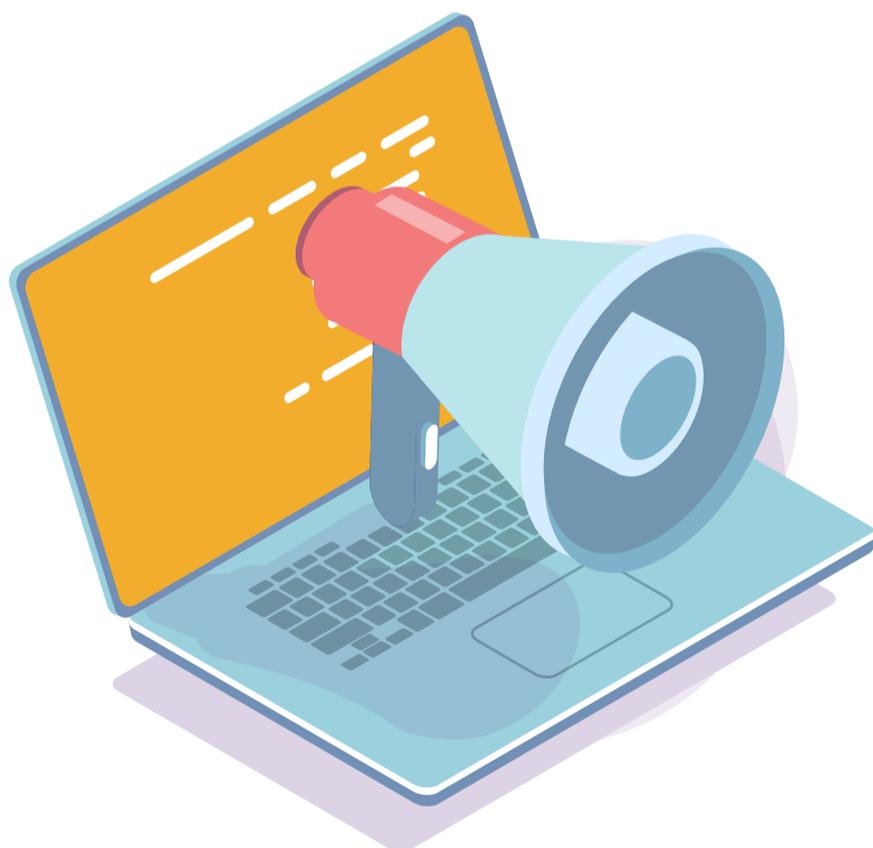
The well-known psychologist, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, said players enter a state of “optimal experience,” or “flow” when playing games. People can experience flow from games, sports, art, hobbies or any activity where they’re simultaneously enjoying and challenging themselves. You’ve most likely experienced flow, and like others, value the feeling highly.

The second a player enters the flow state of mind, they become completely focused on the task at hand and shut out all other distractions.

When experiencing flow, they're "in the zone." A cheap gimmick won't have this powerful effect on players, so it's crucial to create a quality advergaming that's representative of your brand.

[Check out our portfolio!](#)

A quality game will shut out all other distractions and lock players in on your brand. The players will be ready to engage with your brand and continue the relationship.



3. Advergaming increase brand awareness

A great mobile game entertains its players. A great advergaming not only entertains, but it also acts as a powerful medium of communication. A well-made advergaming will increase brand awareness because it'll accomplish 5 brand awareness factors:

1. Make your logo memorable:

It takes 5 to 7 impressions for a consumer to remember your brand, and every impression after that makes your brand more memorable. Advergaming strategically place your brand's logo throughout the game, so players see it, without being distracted by it.

2. Advertise your products and services:

Consumers hate ads because they're often disruptive and forced. Advergaming remove the worry of disrupting players because they allow players to interact with your products.

Delightful advertising is all about enhancing the gamer's experience while educating them about your products. It's mutually beneficial because the more they play your game and interact with your products, the deeper the connection they create with them.

Tip: Not all advergames advertise products seamlessly. There have been some awkward product placements in games. This kind of advertising leaves a bad taste in the player's mouth because it's unnatural and takes away from the experience.

Want a better idea of how games can represent your brand?

[Request a free demo](#)



3. Align your brand mission with the game mission:

What better way to educate consumers about your brand mission than to make it the mission of the game? This is only possible if you work with a gaming company that gets to know your company first.

We made a game for a fuel company whose mission is providing drivers fuel to power their journeys and make sure no one gets stranded on the road. The game, Sketch Rally, is an endless driver game where players weave through a winding road, collecting branded fuel to keep their car going.

4. Communicate your brand values:

Shared values are the primary reason 64% of consumers have a relationship with a brand. Just like with your brand's mission, an effective advergaming can communicate your brand values.

Chipotle used a "spot the difference" type game to entertain consumers while communicating their brand values of healthy food production.

5. Turn customers into promoters: Games communicate and encourage players to keep the conversation going. Mobile games have share features that allow players to introduce your brand to their friends on social media and propel word of mouth marketing.

4. Advergames boost foot traffic and sales



Games uplift your product promotions

What does your typical product promotion look like? Do you find it difficult to get consumers to participate? Games take away the pain of product promotions, so you can consistently craft effective campaigns.

Developing a game is a commitment for the first product promotion, but it'll make the rest of your promotions a piece of cake. Mobile games have long lives, so you don't have to craft a new promotional strategy every time you're promoting new products. You can keep the majority of your game the same and just change the products that appear in your game to match the different promotional campaigns you're running.

Games boost foot traffic

Games influence consumer behavior and encourage players to take physical action. Some small business owners leveraged the Pokemon Go craze to entice consumers to visit their stores.

Advergames naturally do the same when they're integrated into your loyalty app.



Customers that win discounted products from playing your game go to your store to collect their prize. Players can access special game modes and power-ups and collect in-game credits when playing in brand locations or purchasing in-store products. These all incentivize customers to keep going to your stores.

Games elevate customer experience

Advergaming is transforming the customer experience

and it can have an overwhelmingly positive effect on your company's sales. From pre-sale to post-sale, games provide a delightful experience to players. And providing that experience will go a long way in the consumer's mind.

86% of consumers are likely to repurchase after receiving excellent customer service. A positive experience with your brand encourages loyalty because you stand out more favorably among your competitors.

Games leverage virtual goods

Whereas most promotional campaigns live and die off discounts, games leverage players' love for virtual goods to help you avoid burning through your pockets.

The virtual goods industry is valued at \$50 billion because players want to have a personalized experience. Avatar customization and virtual goods allow players to place and express themselves in your game. Players will continue to visit your stores, buy your products, and engage with your brand to win virtual goods.

Discounts are an excellent incentive to create initial momentum for your promotional campaign, but they're not a practical reward to keep giving out. Virtual goods reward customers without hurting your profits.



5. Advergaming encourages loyalty and long-term engagement

Games encourage customer loyalty

There's a reason why heavy mobile gamers spend over 5 hours a week playing games: because games are fun. Providing the optimal experience to your customers will make your brand more likable.

We added a branded game to one of our client's loyalty app, and in the first month of it running, 5-star customer reviews went up from 85 in the previous month to 426. Likability is a major factor in customer loyalty, so an increase in likability is very favorable to your sales.

When customers love your brand, their spending will show it. Repeat customers spend, on average, 67% more than first time buyers.

Companies using advergames to engage

There are some major brands already using advergames to transform customer engagement and encourage long-term loyalty.

Chipotle took a chance on an elaborate marketing strategy, creating not only a short film, *The Scarecrow*, but also an advergame based on the movie.

Chipotle included deals and discounts for players who scored at least 3 out of 5 stars on the different levels, encouraging continued interaction with the game. This strategy also worked to bring customers into a restaurant, where they likely spent more than they might otherwise because they were receiving part of their meal for free.

Moreover, the game icon is a constant brand reminder every time players open their phone, a veritable marketing ad that the consumer is allowing to set up shop on their home screen.



Another major brand using advergames to their advantage is **Monster Energy**. In 2018, they premiered a motorbike racing advergame, *Monster Energy Supercross*. Instead of trying to convince consumers that their energy drinks give the biggest boosts, their video game is a subconscious affirmation that their product gives you energy. The game received such a positive response that they came out with a second version just a year later.

Many other big-name companies have upped their marketing strategy with advergames.

[List of Advergames](#)



Customer loyalty fuels word of mouth marketing

No matter how well you promote your brand, customers' opinions will always be more convincing to consumers. Consumers are 90% more likely to buy from a brand if it was recommended by a friend. Your loyal customers will promote your brand, and a share feature on your game will encourage them to do that.

People love to compete, especially against their friends. A share feature in your game allows players to show off their high scores and achievements.

When they share this on social media, your brand gets favorable exposure to everyone in their network.

Games encourage long-term engagement

Random elements of a game and the decisions that come with it make each gaming session unique and exciting to a player.

Other forms of media can't provide that to consumers, so, no matter how good a video is, consumers will grow tired of the monotony.

People have played over 1.1 trillion rounds of Candy Crush because the game continues to provide entertainment to players, 6 years into its existence.

If you're struggling to get consumers to engage with your brand's loyalty app consistently, a game can be your savior. For one of our recent games, players checked into the loyalty app twice as frequently as non-players, and 28-day app retention was 6 times higher for players than non-players.



Advergames are powerful marketing tools that keep evolving to become more and more effective. Current marketing methods are failing to reach, or even worse, scaring off consumers. Make consumers fans and increase sales by building a game around your brand.

If you want a better idea if an advergame is right for your business, or to learn more about how a game will delight your customers, request a free consultation!

Is an advergame right for your business?

Free Consultation



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Build a playful link
to your customers